

Responsive to the official communication of December 3, 2002, Applicant submits the following Amendments and Remarks.

It is not believed that extensions of time are required beyond those which may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this Amendment. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to prevent abandonment of this application, then such extensions of time are hereby petitioned for under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), and any fees required therefore are hereby authorized to be charged to our Deposit Account 20-0823.

Please amend the above-identified application as set forth below.

In The Specification:

Please amend the specification as indicated:

At page 1, after the title and before the heading "Background of the Invention" insert the following paragraph:

—This application is a continuation in part of prior U.S. application Serial No. 09/034,756, filed March 4, 1998, now U.S. Patent No. 6,392,028, issued May 21, 2002; which is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 08/811,566, filed March 4, 1997, now U.S. Patent No. 6,127,116, issued October 3, 2000; which claims priority to Provisional application Ser. No. 60/039,843, filed March 4, 1997, now abandoned.—

At page 2 please replace the paragraph beginning at line 11 with the following paragraph:

—Although interferon (IFN)- α has been shown to be useful for the treatment of a minority of patients with chronic HCV infections [Davis et al., *N. Engl. J. Med.* 321, 1501-1506 (1989); DiBisceglie et al., *N. Engl. J. Med.* 321, 1506-1510 (1989)] and subunit vaccines show some promise in the chimpanzee model [Choo et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 91, 1294-1298 (1994)], future efforts are needed to develop more effective therapies and vaccines. The considerable diversity observed among different HCV isolates [for review, see Bukh et al., *Sem. Liver Dis.* 15, 41-63 (1995)], the emergence of genetic variants in chronically infected individuals [Enomoto et al., *J. Hepatol.* 17, 415-416 (1993); Hijikata et al., *Biochem. Biophys. Res. Comm.* 175, 220-